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WHAT WE DEMAND FROM FRANCE.

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BY

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFATORY NOTE.

It is of the utmost importance that Great Britain should clearly comprehend the nature and the grounds of the demands which Germany addresses to France. In Professor Von Treitschke's tract, which is here offered to the reader, he will find the same views expressed and defended with which Count Bismark's official circulars have made us familiar; and a careful consideration of it may help him to understand the difficulties which surround the question of the settlement of the disputed frontier.

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WHAT WE DEMAND FROM FRANCE.

WHEREVER Germans live, as far as the remote colonies beyond the sea, the flags are flying from every window, and the clanging of bells and the thunder of cannon are proclaiming victory after victory. All of us know that after three more frightful struggles—at Metz, at Strassburg, at Paris—the war will be gloriously closed. To him who remembers at this moment the bitter shame which we have hidden in our hearts for so many years, since the day of Olmütz, it must often appear, as if all this were a dream. The nation cannot rejoice in its victory with its whole heart. The sacrifices which that victory demanded were too frightful; but the stakes actually paid in the bloody game, in which the flower of our German youths was to perish in battle against

Turcos and mercenaries, are ludicrously unlike our anticipations.

Out of our mourning for our fallen heroes rises the fixed resolve, that we Germans shall fight it out to the very end. King William, who has so often, during these weeks, spoken out the word that was in all our hearts, has solemnly promised already, that the peace shall be worthy of our sacrifices. At such a time, the task of the political writer is a very modest one. Only a dilettante can take the trouble to draw out, in all their details, the heads of a peace, the preliminary conditions of which have not yet become visible to statesmen. We do not know in what condition our troops, when they enter it, will find the morally and politically wasted capital of the enemy. We cannot calculate how long it may be before the blind rage of the French will soften into a temper which will enable us to treat with them. We cannot even guess what power will govern France after this monstrous disloyalty of all parties, disgraceful alike to the despot and the people. But one task remains for our Press—to bring out the unuttered and half-formed hopes which move in every breast, into clear consciousness, so that, on the conclusion of peace, a firm and intelligent national pride may rise in enthusiasm behind our statesmen. When Ger-

many last dictated peace in Paris, we had reason to lament bitterly that the German diplomatists had no such support.

The thought, however, which, after first knocking timidly at our doors, as a shame-faced wish, has, in four swift weeks, grown to be the mighty war-cry of the nation, is no other than this:—"Restore what you stole from us long ago; give back Elsass and Lothringen."

I.

WHAT WE DEMAND.

WERE I to marshal the reasons which make it our duty to demand this, I should feel as if the task had been set me to prove that the world is round. What can be said on the subject, was said after the battle of Leipzig, in Ernst Moritz Arndt's glorious tract, "The Rhine the German river, not the German boundary;" said exhaustively, and beyond contradiction, at the time of the Second Peace of Paris, by all the considerable statesmen of non-Austrian Germany—by Stein and Humboldt, by Münster and Gagern, by the two Crown Princes of Würtemberg and Bavaria; and confirmed, since that time, by the experience of two generations. If a reckless, robber-war like this is to cost that frivolous people nothing more than a war indemnity, the cynical jesters who worship chance and fortune as the only governing powers among the nations, and laugh at the rights of States as a dream of kind-hearted ideo-

logues, would be proved to be in the right. The sense of justice to Germany demands the lessening of France. Every intelligent man sees that that military nation cannot be forgiven even for the economic sacrifices of the war, on the payment of the heaviest indemnity in money. Why was it that, before the declaration of the war, the anxious cry rang through Elsass and Lothringen,—"The dice are to be thrown to settle the destiny of our provinces,"—before a single German newspaper had demanded the restitution of the plunder? Because the awakened conscience of the people felt what penalty would have to be paid in the interests of justice by the disturber of the peace of nations.

What is demanded by justice is, at the same time, absolutely necessary for our security. Let the reader glance at the map, and he will see in an instant what a jest it was, what a bitter cynicism, to fix such boundaries for Germany, after our victorious arms had, twice over, given peace to the world! In the east, the triangle of strong fortresses between Vistula and Narew cleaves like a dividing wedge between Prussia and Silesia. In the west, Strassburg is in the hands of France—the beautiful "pass into the Empire," as Henry II. of France enviously called it three hundred years ago. We have

seen, for some twenty years, how the whole Pontoon corps of the French lay in garrison in that great gate opening on the Upper Rhine; and we have watched them at their summer amusements, throwing their bridges of boats over the Rhine as a friendly preparation for the German war. The railway bridge at Kehl, which is indispensable to the commerce of the world, had to be blown up at once after the declaration of war. The guns of Fort Mortier look menacingly down on the open town of Altbreisach, which fell a prey to them once before. A little higher, at the Istein Rock, two shots from a French outwork would break up the railway between Freiburg and Upper Germany. Such a boundary is intolerable to a proud nation; it is a living memory of those days of German impotence, when the mournful inscription stood over the Rhine gate at Altbreisach, "I was the prison wall of the Frenchman; now, I am his gateway and his bridge. Alas, there will soon be nothing to confine him, left anywhere."

At the time of the Second Peace of Paris the Crown Prince of Wurtemberg warned us, that if Germany omitted to secure the German boundaries on the Upper Rhine, the instinct of self-preservation would, sooner or later, unite the Courts of South Germany in a new Rhine

Confederation. Thanks to the growth of Prussia, and to the sound patriotic sense of the princes of Bavaria and Baden, the prophecy has not come literally true; but it was very far from an empty speech. The danger of a new Confederation of the Rhine threatened the unprotected South for fifty long years. For fifty years have the people of South Germany, oscillating between blind admiration and passionate hatred, failed, on almost every occasion, to maintain that proud reserve towards their French neighbours which becomes a great people, and which springs only from the consciousness of assured strength. When our descendants look back, out of their great Empire, on our struggles, they will doubtless rejoice over the unity of spirit we have shown; but they will shrug their shoulders and say, How unready and insecure was the Germany of our fathers, which overflowed with praise and rang with shouts of joy and astonishment, when the Bavarians and the Swabians, in one inspired moment, fulfilled their confounded duty to their great Fatherland!

Every State must seek the guarantees of its security in itself alone. The silly fancy, that gratitude and magnanimity could secure the German countries against a defeated France, has, twice over, been its own fearful punishment. What German can read without rage the

account of those peace proceedings at Paris, in which victor and vanquished exchanged parts, and a respectful attention was paid to all the prejudices of France, while nobody thought of the feelings of Germany? The fortress of Condè had to be left to the French for the sake of its name: the conquerors thought that it would be cruel to take away a stronghold from France which had been baptised after a great Bourbon general. What thanks did we get for our magnanimity in 1814? The Hundred Days and Waterloo. What gratitude for our consideration in 1815? A steadily growing political demoralisation, which gradually destroyed every feeling of justice in France. A conviction, that not only was the Rhine country the property of France, but that even those Art treasures which the conquerors of the world once took from Berlin and Venice, from Rome and Dantzig, belonged of right to the capital of the whole earth. If the France of 1815, which still possessed a great treasure of moral forces, fell back so soon on greedy dreams of conquest, what have we to expect from the society of the Second Empire, which has lost all its faith in the ideal treasures of life in the course of the barren party struggles of these many years? The nation is our enemy, not this Bonaparte, who rather obeyed than led it. For a long time to come, the

one idea which will inspire the fallen State will be revenge for Woerth and Forbach, revenge for Mars and Gravelotte. For the time, peaceful relations founded on mutual confidence are impossible.

It is not sufficient for us now that we should feel ourselves able to resist an attack from France, or even from a European alliance. Our nation in arms cannot afford to send its sons forth at any moment into such another steeplechase against its greedy neighbour. Our military organisation has no meaning without secure boundaries. The distracted world already foresees a whole brood of wars, springing out of the bloody seed of this. We owe it some guarantee of permanent peace among the nations, and we shall only give it, so far as human strength can, when German guns frown from the fortified passes of the Vosges on the territories of the Welsh (*Wälsch*) race, when our armies can sweep into the plains of Champagne in a few days march, when the teeth of the wild beast are broken, and weakened France can no longer venture to attack us. Even Wellington, the good friend of the Bourbons, had to allow that France was too strong for the peace of Europe; and the statesmen of the present day, whenever they have realised the altered equilibrium of the Powers, will feel that the strengthening of the boundaries of

Germany contributes to the security of the peace of the world. We are a peaceful nation. The traditions of the Hohenzollerns, the constitution of our army, the long and difficult work before us in the upbuilding of our united German State, forbid the abuse of our warlike power. We need a generation devoted to the works of peace, to solve the difficult but not impossible problem of the Unification of Germany, while France is driven into all the delusions of a policy of adventure by the false political ideas which are engrained in her luxurious people, by the Free-lance spirit of her conscript soldiers, and the all but hopeless break-up of her domestic life.

In view of our obligation to secure the peace of the world, who will venture to object that the people of Elsass and Lothringen do not want to belong to us? The doctrine of the right of all the branches of the German race to decide on their own destinies, the plausible solution of demagogues without a fatherland, shivers to pieces in presence of the sacred necessity of these great days. These territories are ours by the Right of the sword, and we shall dispose of them in virtue of a higher Right, the Right of the German nation, which will not permit its lost children to remain strangers to the German Empire. We Germans,

who know Germany and France, know better than these unfortunates themselves what is good for the people of Elsass, who have remained under the misleading influence of their French connection outside the sympathies of new Germany. Against their will we shall restore them to their true selves. We have seen with joyful wonder the undying power of the moral forces of history, manifested far too frequently in the immense changes of these days, to place much confidence in the value of a mere popular disinclination. The spirit of a nation lays hold, not only of the generations which live beside it, but of those which are before and behind it. We appeal from the mistaken wishes of the men who are there to-day to the wishes of those who were there before them. We appeal to all those strong German men, who once stamped the seal of our German nature on the language and manners, the Art and the social life of the Upper Rhine. Before the nineteenth century closes the world will recognise that the spirits of Erwin von Steinbach and Sebastian Brandt are still alive, and that we were only obeying the dictates of national honour when we made little account of the preferences of the people who live in Elsass to-day.

During the two last centuries, from the earliest

beginnings of the Prussian State, we have been struggling to liberate the lost German lands from foreign domination. It is not the object of this national policy to force every strip of German soil which we ever gave up in the days of our weakness, back again into our new Empire. We see without uneasiness, our people in Switzerland developing themselves in peace and freedom unconnected with the German State. We do not count on the breaking up of Austria. We have no desire to interfere with the separate life of that branch of the German stock which has grown up in the Netherlands into a small independent nation. But we cannot permit a German people, thoroughly degraded and debased, to serve against Germany, before our eyes, as the vassal of a foreign power. France owes her predominance in Europe solely to our having been broken into fragments, and to the condition of the other German powers, and her influence is out of all proportion to the real force of the Gallic nationality. Who would have ventured in Luther's days, to say that France would ever be superior to the warlike Germany which he knew? The blood of German nobles flowed in torrents in the Huguenot wars of the French; a German host, the host of Bernhard von Weimar, was the solid centre round which the armies of Louis XIV.

grew up; it was in our own school that the Welsh first learned to defeat us. Who can count all the German commanders of the Bourbons, from Bassenstein (Bassompierre) down to Marechal de Saxe; all the gallant German regiments, Royal Alsace, Royal Deux Ponts, Royal Allemand; all the teeming hosts of war-like dependents whom the treachery of German princes brought under the yoke of the foreigner? When those frightful robberies began with the Revolution, which at last made the determination to fight the French like a passion in the blood of our peaceful people, and the name of "Frenchman" a synonym in North Germany for "enemy," there were thousands of Germans still fighting under that enemy's banner. Ney and Kellermann, Lefèvre, Rapp, and Kleber, were counted among the bravest of the brave. Even in this war, the best soldiers in the army of France are the sturdy German stock of the people of Elsass and Lothringen, and the genuine Celtic race of Bretagne.

When Elsass fell under the dominion of the French, our Empire lay powerless on the ground. The fire of the German spirit, which had once flamed through the whole world, seemed extinguished. Germany bowed herself before the conquering policy and the victorious culture of France. Even so, the French

spirit has been unable quite to displace the German popular spirit, which is even yet as vigorous as it is on the Upper Rhine. Since that time, the life of our people has progressed steadily from strength to strength. We are before the French to-day in the number and in the density of our population. How often have their war orators demanded conquests on the Rhine, because France has been unable to keep pace with the increase in our population, as if it were the bounden duty of us Germans to make up for Celtic unchastity and impotence by pouring into their veins, every now and then, fresh German blood? We have broken with the rules of their Art, and we can confidently challenge comparison between the free movement of our scientific and religious life, and the spiritual culture of France. We have succeeded in giving our richer and stronger language, such a freedom and delicacy that it need no longer fear the rivalry of French. Even the advantage of their elder culture, the fine tone and polish of social intercourse, is passing away, since the wanton audacity of the *demimonde* of Paris has all but blotted out the division lines between honourable and degraded people. We adopted with gratitude the ideas of their Revolution, so far as they were healthy, and we have built them up on the solid basis of a

free administration, such as France never knew. We are trying earnestly to procure, after our own fashion, that priceless blessing of the unity of the State for which we have long envied them; and we believe that we shall be able by hard work to make up for the slight advantage in their economic life, which they owe to the Empire and to the situation of their country.

They have felt the weight of our sword, and we had challenged the whole world to say which of the two combatants bore himself with the greater manliness, uprightness, and modesty. At all times, the subjection of a German race to France has been an unhealthy thing; to-day it is an offence against the reason of History—a vassalship of free men to half-educated barbarians. Sooner or later the hour must have struck which would have summoned the growing German State to demand security from France for the preservation of our nationality in Elsass. It has come sooner, and it is more full of promise, than any of us had hoped; and it is our business now to draw honourable lines of separation between the German and the Welsh races, and to lay the old quarrel for ever. Fifty years ago Arndt lamented that if right was not done in that day, it would be very difficult in the future to do it at all. If we neglect our duty this time, the French

will act with all that vigorous and passionate hatred which characterizes nations in their decay; and will fling themselves on Elsass in the rage of their re-awakened detestation of Germany, resolute to crush out every trace of the German nature. It would be to our disgrace, as much as to our disadvantage; and we should have to draw the sword again to protect our own flesh and blood from the most hateful of all tyrannies—the suppression of its language.

The wretched outcome of the Second Peace of Paris was fruitful of consequences in our domestic situation; it greatly contributed to fix in the true hearts of our people that embittered discontent which was so long the key-note of German political feeling. Our victorious armies must not return this time with the bitter cry, that their priceless sacrifices have been rewarded with ingratitude. What we need, above all things, is the glad entlfusiasm that rises buoyant on the wave of great events—the joyful self-consciousness which cannot grow freely within the constraining furrows of petty Statedom. In all the words of patriotism, which rang through South Germany before the battle of Woerth, there never was a doubt expressed as to our final victory, but many a one spoke of the fear that we should have to wade through the waters of

misfortune of some new Jena before we could reach ultimate victory. We must have done with this weary self-distrust, which has eaten into the simple greatness of our national character. But so long as that wound still gapes on the Upper Rhine, the German will never cease the sorrowful lamentation which Schlegel uttered in the days of our shame:—

> "Upon the Rhine, my own countrie,
> Ah, well-a-day, what woe is me!
> For that so much is lost to us!"

The masses of South Germany know little of those splendid successes which the sword of Prussia long since obtained for us. The liberation of Pomerania, Silesia, Old-Prussia and Schleswig-Holstein, lay far outside of the circle of their vision. Yet the old song,

> "O Strassburg, O Strassburg,
> Thou city wondrous fair!"

is sung by every peasant of the South; and from the day when the German flag waves from the Minster, —and a splendid and enduring reward of victory crowns the deeds of the German army,—in the distant huts of the Black Forest, and the Suabian Jura, there will be a joyful confidence that the old German splendours have risen from the dead, and that a new Augmenter has been given to the Empire.

When our united strength has won that outwork of the German State which is now in such mortal peril, the nation will have pledged its soul to the idea of Unity. The resistance of the new province will strengthen the impulse of our policy towards unity, and constrain all sensible men to range themselves in disciplined loyalty behind the Prussian throne. The advantage is all the greater, as it is still possible that some new Republican attempt in Paris might tempt the moonstruck glances of the German Radicals once more to turn gradually towards the West. But the circle of vision of German politics becomes yearly wider and freer. When the nation feels that the vital interests of the German States are involved in the Slave, the Scandinavian, and the Latin world, and that we are standing in the midst of the greatest and most complex Revolution of the century, our parties will learn to rise out of the dogmatism of party life, and above the poverty of *doctrinaire* programmes, to the earnest and lofty treatment of the great questions which concern the State.

The German Confederation which has crossed the line of the Main will best fulfil its national mission when the clear activity of the North, and the more delicate and contemplative nature of the South, stand side by

side in beautiful rivalry. We cannot spare one of all the powerful races which make up the complete German nation. But the narrow footstool of the Confederation in the south-east reaches no farther than the Bohemian forest. The manifold wealth of our German civilisation will be vastly augmented when the South German nation is more fully represented in our new State, and the powerful nationality of the Germans of the Upper Rhine will certainly show its genuine German colour very soon after the foreign whitewash has been washed away.

A politico-economical consideration may be added. Inspiring descriptions of the rich and happy plains of Germany make a necessary chapter of our patriotic Catechism, and are never omitted in our German school-books. They affect us as a sign of true love to the land of our forefathers; but they are anything but true in themselves. Our sober judgment cannot refuse to admit that nature has dealt with our country much more like a step-mother than a mother. The singularly barren outline of our short coast-line on the North Sea, and the course of most of our German rivers and hill chains, are just as unfavourable to political unity as they are to commerce. Only a few strips of our German soil can compare in natural fertility with wealthy Nor-

mandy, the luxurious plains of England, and the teeming corn-fields of the interior of Russia. But here, in Elsass, there is a real German district, the soil of which, under favouring skies, is rich with blessings such as only a very few spots in the Upper Rhenish Palatinate and the mountain country of Baden enjoy. The unusual configuration of the country has made it possible to pierce canals through gaps in the mountains—magnificent water-ways, from the Rhine to the basin of the Rhone and of the Seine—such as German ground scarcely ever admits. We are by no means rich enough to be able to renounce so precious a possession.

Everything, in fact, is as clear as day. None of the foreign statesmen, who interfered with our plans at the time of the Second Peace of Paris, ever attempted to meet the arguments of Humboldt. Jealousy of the growing greatness of Germany, and the opposition which dominated all that period between the policies of England and of Russia,—which vied with each other in showing favour to France,—were decisive. England had already secured her war prizes in her colonies, and Russia hers in her Polish territories; Germany was left alone to make her further demands.

The full cynicism of this jealous statesmanship is revealed in the words which the Czar Alexander per-

mitted himself in a thoughtless moment, "Either I must have a hand in this pie, or the pie shall not be baked at all." Freiherr von Stein said sorrowfully,—"Russia decides that we are to remain vulnerable!" What a difference there is between then and now! We are not now so exhausted in money and in men, as not to be able to defy the opposition of the whole of Europe. The Neutral Powers might have stopped this French attempt at robbery, by one strong and timely word. They failed to utter it, and they cannot complain to-day because we alone decide what we shall take as the prize of the victory which we alone have won. We are not now in the days when our commanders complained that the pens of the diplomatists spoiled everything that the swords of the peoples had fought for and won. We owe it to the clear-sighted audacity of Count Bismarck that this war was begun at the right time—that the Court of the Tuilleries was not allowed the welcome respite which would have permitted it to complete the web of its treacherous devices. And as the war began as a work of clear and statesmanlike calculation, so it will end. If, during its prosecution, we have been magnanimous, almost to a fault—if we turned aside from the revolting ill-usage of our countrymen in France, and

disdained to requite with a like brutality the loathsome threats directed against the women of Baden, we are all the more bound, at all hazards, to be firm about the terms of peace, and to complete the work of 1813 and of 1815. What lay in all our hearts as a far-off vision of longing desire, has suddenly sprung up a practical fact, to be dealt with by a nation unprepared for it. Occasion urges us; the wonderful favour of Destiny bends down to offer us, in the grey dawn of German unity, the wreath which we hardly hoped to have won in the mid-day splendour of the German Empire. Let us grasp it with courageous hands, that the blood of the dear ones who have died for us may not again cry out against our faint-heartedness.

II.

ELSASS AND LOTHRINGEN PAST AND PRESENT.

WHERE lies the frontier which we are justified in demanding? The answer is simple; for since the French nation made itself prominent in the Celto-Romance world, its national life and ours have at all times stood toughly and sharply opposed to one another. The two peoples dwelt side by side, not cast together like the nations which a geographical necessity forces to mingle at various points in Eastern Europe. Our West and South have, for a long period, received more culture than they gave, and yet the French boundary of language has been able, in the course of centuries, to advance no farther than a few hours' march. It became a source of trouble to both peoples, when an arbitrary system of creating new States wedged the Lotharingo-Burgundian Empire in between their natural frontiers, to become an

apple of unceasing contests; while both made a termination of the struggle difficult to themselves by an aberration of the national imagination. To this day the Frenchman continues to glance across the Rhine with feelings like those of the ancient Romans under Cæsar. He has never forgotten the days, when gorgeous Treves was the capital of Gaul; his school-books describe those first centuries of the Middle Ages, in which no French nation yet existed, as a period of French dominion. The German Karl is the Frenchman's Charlemagne; in numerous inscriptions of Elsass towns the memory of the Merowingian Dagoberts is purposely freshened up, in order to recall the ancient power of France. Already in the fifteenth century, when the Armagnacs were bringing fire and sword into Upper Germany, the longing for the Rhine-frontier found expression in France. Above all, since the days of Louis XIV. and Napoleon I., state and society, press and school, have run a race of rivalry in perverting history; and the whole of France laments the enormous breach between Lauterburg and Dunkirk, which the grasping greed of Germany is declared to have made in the natural boundaries of France. We Germans, on the other hand, are unwilling to forget the supreme rights, which the Holy Roman Empire

once possessed over the Burgundian kingdom of the Arelat.

No more time is to be lost in cheerfully relinquishing this dreaming of antiquated dreams. As it is our intention to force the French to renounce their vision of the Rhine-frontier, to give up to us what is ours, to recognise the European necessity of the two intermediate States on the Lower Rhine and on the Schelde, we must concede to them what is their due, and frankly confess that the conquering policy of France, directed against the Burgundian territories, obeyed, in its beginnings, a well-justified national instinct. Afterwards, indeed, deluded by easy successes, it passed all bounds. More than 50,000 square miles of the Holy Empire belong at this day to the French State, and by far the greater part of them most justly. The Southern Provinces of the Burgundian kingdom were French, beyond a doubt. When Charles V. endeavoured at the Peace of Madrid, to sever them from France, the estates of Burgundy unanimously vowed that they were Frenchmen, and Frenchmen they would remain; and the history of three centuries has justified their declaration. The fact that the ancient one-headed eagle of our Empire once stood gorgeous on the townhall of Lyons, over

the same gate where we see the equestrian statue of Henry IV. to-day; the fact that the same eagle once gazed down upon the glorious amphitheatre of Arles; and all similar facts, are but historical reminiscences which concern us little, and which are of no more value for the present policy of Germany than the ancient feudal rights of our Emperors in Italy.

We desire to renew the power and glory of the Hohenstaufens and the Ottos, but not their World-Empire. Our new State owes its strength to the national idea. Its intention is to be an honest neighbour to every foreign nationality, a grasping adversary to none; and for this reason it finds its western frontier indicated to it by the language and manners and life of the rural population. Every State is kept fresh and young from below. New forces never cease to arise out of the healthy depths of the peasant class, while the population of the towns swiftly changes, and the families of the upper classes either fall away or are carried off into other habitations. We Germans still continue to make this experience in the colonies of our Eastern frontier. Wherever we have succeeded in Germanising the peasant, our national life stands erect; wherever he has remained non-German, German ways of life wage to this day a struggle for their

existence. Applying this standard, we shall find German and French nationality separated by a line, which may be roughly described as leading along the ridge of the Vosges to the sources of the Saar, and thence to the north-west towards Diedenhofen and Longwy. What lies beyond is Welsh (*Wälsch*). This boundary-line, hard to be perceived in the hilly districts of Lothringen, is drawn with mathematical precision at several points of the Wasgau hills. Wandering westward from the busy little town of Wesserling in Upper Elsass, one first ascends through leafy woods, enjoying the view into the smiling valley of the Thur, and reaching at Urbes the river boundary, the frontier of the *département* of the Upper Rhine. There the road leads through a long tunnel, and the moment the traveller passes out of the dark into the *département* of the Vosges, he sees that the country and its inhabitants have undergone a complete change. The woods of Germany have vanished, and naked hills surround the valley of the infant Mosel. True, it is possible to guess, from the aspect of the tall peasants, from whom the French army draws so many fine-looking Cuirassiers, that many a drop of Germanic blood may flow in the veins of the population; but down at Boussang no word of German is spoken. The poorer fashion in which the houses are built, the

wooden shoes, and the cotton night-cap, at once betray French civilisation. It is nothing short of German Chauvinism which makes a few newspapers already gratify themselves by restoring to Remirémont, which is entirely French, the name of Reimersberg. What is it to us, that the geographers of the sixteenth century called Plombières the Plumbersbad? that lovely Pont-a-Mousson once formed an Imperial county named Muselbruck? that no further back than eighty years ago the duchy of Lothringen was mentioned under the name of Nomeny in the diet at Ratisbon? So, too, it is possible, even in Nanzig (Nancy) to discover faint traces of German reminiscences. At the railway-station the German traveller is cheered to observe the comfortable inscription, "*Trinkstube*" by the side of the inevitable "*Buvette.*" But the capital of Lothringen is French in manners and in language. This second and more charming Versailles received its architectural character from the French *régime* of its *Stanislas le Bienfaisant*, and four years ago it was both sincere and justified in celebrating the centenary jubilee of its incorporation in France.

Hardly the tithe of those French provinces which once upon a time belonged to the Germanic Empire—a territory comprising about 5000 square miles, with

rather less than a million and a half of inhabitants—can at this day be reckoned as German land. It is not the business of a wise national policy to go very far beyond this extent of territory; but, at the same time, such a policy ought not to cling, with *doctrinaire* obstinacy, to the boundary of language as a limit which must, in no case, be crossed. There is no perfect identity between the political and the national frontier in any European country. Not one of the great Powers, and Germany no more than the rest of them, can ever subscribe to the principle, that "language alone decides the formation of States." It would be impossible to carry that principle into effect. From a military point of view, the German territory in France is secured by two strongholds, which lie a few miles beyond the line of language. The fortress of Belfort commands the gap in the mountains between the Jura and the Vosges, which has so often been the gateway through which invading hosts have passed into or out of France. The upper part of the course of the Mosel, again, is covered by Metz, which is at this day, like Belfort, almost entirely French, in spite of its ancient traditions as an Imperial city *(Reichstadt)*, in spite of the German inscriptions which still appear here and there, on a waggoner's hostelry in the high-roofed

"German street" *(Deutsche Gasse)*, in spite of the bad French dialect spoken by its citizens, in spite of the two thousand German inhabitants, to whom sermons used to be preached in German only a few years ago. Are we to renounce these two strongholds for the sake of an untenable dogma? Renounce the strong walls of Metz, which are trebly necessary to us, since, in our good-natured desire for peace, we relinquished the rock nest of Luxemburg? No! right and prudence support our moderate claims, when we simply demand the German territory in the possession of France, and so much Welsh territory as is necessary for securing its possession; in other words, something like the *Départements Haut-Rhin* and *Bas-Rhin* in their entirety, the greater part of *Moselle*, and the lesser part of *Meurthe*. The Virgin image, which so long stood boastfully over the arms of Metz, and which defied even the hosts of Charles V., shall be struck to the ground by our good sword to-day. The brave Saxon troops were permitted to aid in re-conquering the fortress, with the sacrifice of which the Saxon Maurice commenced the long period of German humiliation. It ill befits a people rising to new greatness to abandon the spot where the justice of its destiny has so visibly prevailed. The comfort of the

French at Metz is of little importance compared with the necessity of securing its natural capital, and a strong bulwark, for the province of Lothringen. In the progress of time, German ways of life will find a home once more in the ancient episcopal city. As for measures of force against their nationality they need no more be feared by the Welsh Lothringers and the inhabitants of the few Welsh-speaking villages of the Vosges, than they have had to be feared by the brave Walloons in Malmedy and Montjoie, who at this day rival their German fellow-citizens in faithful self-devotion.

If a livelier sense of their common duties and interests prevailed in the family of European States, the arrogant disturber of their peace would have to be humbled far more deeply. He would be forced to give up Savoy and Nice to Italy, and West Flanders, famous from of old, with Dunkirk, with Lille—the ancient Ryssel,—with Douai, on whose town-hall the Flemish lion still brandishes the weather-flag, to Belgium. But the *vis inertiæ*, the fear which fills Europe at the thought of any violent change, and the secret mistrust with which all the States regard the new Germany, will hardly permit so thorough a reconstruction of the political system of Europe.

The German territory which we demand is ours by nature and by history. It is true that here, where the Rhine still rushes along as an untamed stream from the glaciers, changing its bed according to its will, the people on its opposite banks maintain no such lively intercourse as below Mainz. The traveller who passes from an Elsass village towards the Rhine has often to make long detours through bushes and rolling stones, past morasses in which the Rhine formerly had its bed, and he is not unfrequently detained for an hour by the riverside, until a wretched boat ferries him across to one of the castles of the *Kaiserstuhl*. But after all, no greater difficulties beset the intercourse between the high-lying lands of Baden and the *Überrhein* than that between the Baden and the Bavarian Palatinate, or between Starkenburg and Rhenish Hesse. Nature herself meant that the plain of the Upper Rhine should have a common destiny, and has environed it with mountain walls of the same formation. On either bank the mountain range reaches its greatest height to the South; for the peasant of the Breisgau, the Elsass Belchen serves as a weatherglass, just as the Sundgau man on the other side gazes upon the Schwarzwald Belchen and the Blue Mountain *(dem Blauen)*. On either bank the lovely scenery displays

its full beauty, where a cross valley comes forth out of the mountain-chain, where the Engelsburg commands the entrance to the valley of the Thur, where the three castles of Rappoltstein look down into the narrow gorge, where the ancient fastness, Hohe Barr, rises from the red rock of the valley of the Zorn—just as on the opposite side at Freiburg, Offenburg and Baden. A trade-road of hoar antiquity crosses the middle of the plain, passing through the Wasgau at the Zabern Stair, through the Schwarzwald at Pforzheim gate, connecting the *Westerreich*, to use the expression of our fathers, with the interior of Germany. Where it crosses the river lies Strassburg, the Köln of the Upper Rhine, with her Minster visible as a landmark in a wide circuit of Upper Germany, as the Cathedral of Köln stands in the districts of Berg. A glorious panorama of German scenery! This thought has most assuredly suggested itself to everyone who has stood in the freshness of morning, when the shreds of the mists still cling to the rocky summits, upon the walls of Schlettstadt. High up on the mountains, tower the dark pine-forests, which are hardly known in the woodless Welsh country; lower down, those bright chestnut-woods, which no man who has once made the Rhine his home can bear to miss; on the slopes, the

gardens of vines; and down below, that undulating odorous plain, the mere recollection of which charmed from Goethe in his old age glowing words of praise for his "glorious Elsass." Even we of the younger generation, who are more familiar with the beauty of the mountains, and have a duller sense for the charms of the plain, than the people of the eighteenth century, cannot help joining in the enthusiasm of the old Master-poet, as he describes the broad fruit-trees in the midst of the cornfield, the ancient limes of the Wanzenau, and the play of the sunlight, caught and broken at numberless openings of the wide waving plain.

German story winds its wondrous network round the hundred castles of the Sundgau, as closely as the ivy twining round their walls. Here by the rushing waterfall the giant's daughter ascended to the castle of Nideck, carrying the peasant wight in her apron, plough and horses and all. There on Tronja dwelt the dread Hagen of the Nibelungs; high up on the Wasgenstein raged the wild conflicts of our Song of Waltharius. Here in the valley of the Zorn, Fridolin went his way to the forge. There, by the Bergkirche, flows a fountain of the tears of Ottilia, saint of sorrow and suffering, like unto that which flows on the other

bank in the quiet recess of the valley near Freiburg. Everywhere in the merry little land, German humour, and German merriment and enjoyment of life held their jousts. The Count of Rappoltstein was the king of all singers and errants of the Holy Empire, and every year he summoned the masterless Guild of Jesters to a joyous Diet of Pipers. In the town-hall of Mülhausen is preserved to this day the chattering-stone *(Klapperstein)*, which used to be hung round the necks of quarrelsome women. Without the golden wine of Rangen the delicate spire of the Church of St. Theobald at Thann could never have risen so boldly into the air; for it was a prosperous vintage, and the grape-gatherers came to the rescue of the despairing architect and mixed fiery must with his mortar, lest the joists of the airy edifice should fall asunder.

Elsass has always maintained an honourable place in the earlier history of German Art. A thousand years ago the famous Ottfried, in his monk's cell at Weissenburg, wrote his *Krist*, the most ancient great monument of old German poetry which has come down to our time. Gottfried of Strassburg sang the passionate lay of Tristan and Isolda, and Master Walter von der Vogelweide proclaimed the poetic glories of Reinmar of Hagenau. Those marvels of Gothic architecture

arose in Thann and Strassburg, and Martin Schongauer painted his simple-minded pictures for the good town of Colmar. Above all, the jest and the mocking play of wit have remained ever dear to the joyous sons of our frontier-land. Nearly all the noteworthy humorists of our earlier literature were natives of Elsass, or, at all events, socially connected with the district. In Strassburg the liberal-minded and loveable wag, Sebastian Brandt, wrote his *Ship of Fools*, and Thomas Murner his malicious satires against the Lutherans. George Wickram, who, in his "*Rollwagen*" (country waggon), collected the merriest conceits of our ancestors, was a Colmar boy; and in Lothringian Forbach dwelt Fischart, the mightiest among the few Germans who have manifested power amounting to genius in comic poetry.

And what a busy mixture of political forces, what power and boldness of German civic life, there gathered in the little land, in the days when the lions of the Hohenstaufen still gazed down as lords and masters from the royal citadel above. Eleven free cities of the Empire, among them Hagenau, the favourite city of Barbarossa, which he entrusted with the imperial jewels, and, outshining all the rest, Strassburg. What has the capital of the *Départe-*

ment Bas-Rhin done or seen done, that might be even compared to the ancient history—great in its smallness, proud in its modesty—of the German Imperial city? Its episcopal see was called the noblest of the nine great foundations which came one after another along the "priestly lane" *(Pfaffengasse)* of the Rhine; and at all times loud praises were heard in the Empire of the ancient German honesty and bravery of its citizens. Thus Strassburg faithfully shared all the fortunes of the Rhenish cities—among them the diseases which assailed the very heart and soul of our civic life—the Black Death and its fellow, the Jews' gangrene *(Judenbrand)*. She firmly adhered to the Rhenish Hansa; like Köln, she strove with her bishop in bitter feuds; she saw the great families of the Zorns and Müllnheims contending for the upperhand, as Köln did those of her "*Weisen*" and "*Overstolzen;*" she witnessed the men of the Guilds rise in insurrection against the great families, until at last after their victory there was inscribed in the Common Book of the city, that excellent constitution, which Erasmus compared, as a living ensample of well-ordered government, to the polity of Massilia. The frontier-city loved to hear itself called the strong outwork of the Empire; its citizens looked down with deep hatred

upon their Welsh neighbours; and they marched into the field, with the Swiss, against the Burgundians, and beheaded the bailiff of Charles the Bold at Colmar. Happy days, when the strong "*Pfennigthurm*" could hardly contain the treasure of its wealth, when Guttenberg was venturing upon his first essays, when the fame of the Strassburg master-singers *(Meistersänger)* flew far and wide through the Empire, and the architectural lodge of the Minster sat in judgment over the fellows of its craft as far as Thuringia and Saxony, when the friendly Zurichers, in their fortunate vessel, bore the hot Porridge-Pot *(Breitopf)* down the stream, and Bishop William, of Hoherstein, held the pompous entry of which the keen pen of Sebastian Brandt has left us so charming a description.

The age of the Reformation supervened. Germany reached, for the second time, as she is now reaching for the third time, one of the crowning summits of her national life; and the population of Elsass, too, with lofty consciousness, took part in the great struggles of the German mind. In Strassburg, in Schlettstadt and Hagenau, Dringenberg and Wimpfelingen conducted the learned labours of the schools of the Humanists; Gailer von Kaisersberg preached in German in the Strassburg Minster against the abuses of the Church.

There was a wealth of intellectual forces, of which the Elsass of to-day has not the faintest conception. The maltreated peasantry laid passionate hold of the world-liberating teachings of Wittenberg. The peasants in Elsass affixed the *Bundschuh* (shoe-symbol of union) to the pole, like the peasants hard by in the district of Speier and the Schwarzwald. Like the latter, they fought and suffered. At Zabern the Bishop of Strassburg passed his cruel judgment on the rebels, as the hard Prelate of Speier did at Grombach and on the Kästenburg. In the towns, however, the evangelical doctrine maintained its footing. Fourteen cities of the Empire, with Strassburg at their head, subscribed, at the Diet of Speier, the famous Protest of the seven Princes, which was to give its name to the new faith. Hereupon Martin Bucer began his productive work at Strassburg. The city stood in a mediating position between the Lutheranism of the north and the doctrine of Zwingli. She liberally bestowed upon Protestantism those weapons which have never failed it. She founded her library, her gymnasium, and, at a later date, her famous University, where Hedion and Capito taught. When the Protestants professed their creed at Augsburg, Strassburg, together with three other cities of Upper Germany, handed in her

freer confession, the "*Tetrapolitana.*" After this the city, like the other chief towns of Upper Germany, like Augsburg, Ulm, and Nürnberg, was involved in the evil fortunes of the Smalcaldic League. There remained yet one hope—the aid of France. But the German city disdained an alliance with the arch-foe of the Empire. With death in his heart, her burgomaster, Jacob Sturm, bent his knee before Charles V.; for the Spaniard was the Emperor after all. And when, six years later, the criminally reckless among the German Protestants actually concluded their offensive and defensive league with France, and when King Henry II., as the Protector of "Germanic liberty," advanced his armies towards the Rhine, Strassburg once more proved true to Emperor and Empire, and shut her gates against the French.

Are we to believe that that rich millennium of German history has been utterly destroyed by two centuries of French dominion? Only we Germans who dwell in the upper country, which our ancestors were so fond of calling "the Empire" (*"das Reich"*), can thoroughly realise the terrible extent of the criminal excesses of the Hunlike fury which was directed against us by the French. How different would be the aspect of our native land, did we

possess, besides the glorious city-types of ancient Danzig, Lübeck and Nürnberg, our ancient Speier also, and our ancient Worms and Freiburg, and Heidelberg—those cities with proud towers and lofty roofs, with which Merian was still acquainted. In the Church of Landau the sepulchre still stands which Louis XIV. caused to be erected to his Lieutenant-governor in Elsass, the wild Catalan Montclar, the destroyer of the magnificent Madenburg. The Christian virtue of the ruthless brigand is lauded in grandiloquent Latin, and the inscription thus unctuously concludes, "Pass on thy way, O wanderer, and learn that it is only virtue which ennobles military glory." Was not such a blasphemous offence even more shameful for us, than for the wrongdoers themselves? But the law of nations knows of no prescription.

The land of the Vistula in the possession of the German Order and the castle of its Grand Master, the Marienburg, were once upon a time delivered, by the treason of German estates, into the hands of the stranger. Three centuries passed away before Germany felt herself to be strong enough to demand back from the Poles that of which they had despoiled her. With the same right we seek

justice to-day for the wrong committed by France against our West two centuries ago.

As soon as the three Lothringian Sees had been made over, by the treason of Maurice of Saxony, to France, the Paris politicians, with cunning calculation, directed their first efforts to obtain Elsass, because the remnant of Lothringen, surrounded on all sides by French domains, must follow, after that, of itself. The unspeakable meanness of the numberless petty sovereign lords, among whom Elsass was parcelled out, offered the most satisfactory basis of operations to the devices of French intrigue, during the rotten years of peace which followed the religious Pacification of Augsburg. On the ruins of Hoh-Barr may yet be read, how, in the year 1584, Johann von Manderscheidt, Bishop of Strassburg, erected *hanc arcem nulli inimicam*,—the frontier-fortress against France, hostile to no one! Do not these two words imply the bitterest of satires against the shameful impotence of the sinking Germanic Empire? Do they not recall the delightful inscription, "Grant Peace, O Lord, in this our day," which the valiant army of the Prince-Bishop of Hildesheim wore on their hats? Thus had the higher nobility of the once great German nation been already shaken in its moral forces,

when the Elector of Bavaria, in the Thirty Years' War, abandoned Elsass to the French, upon which the instrument of the peace of Westphalia, in terms capable of divers interpretations, transferred the rights which had previously belonged to the House of Austria, to the French Crown.

It was inevitable that the rigid unity of the French State should next direct its activity towards the final annihilation of those relics of German petty-State-life, which still survived in its new domain. French residents were fixed at Strassburg, and French pay was drawn by the three notorious brothers Fürstenberg, who governed in München, in Köln, and in Strassburg, and whom their indignant contemporaries called the Egonists. Yet while the nobility was thus weaving the nets of France, German intellectual force and German fidelity were long preserved to the people in Elsass. It was at this very period that the famous Philip Jacob Spener, who awakened to a new life the moral force of Lutheranism which had waxed cold and dull, was growing up in Rappoltsweiler; and the people joyously hailed the Brandenburger as he struggled with the French on the Upper Rhine, and then routed the Swedes at Fehrbellin on his own Marches. A popular song, printed

at Strassburg in 1675, to be sung to the old Protestant tune of "Gustav Adolf, high-born leader," commences thus:

"With might the great Elector came,
Peace to secure right truly;
He seeks to break the Frenchman's pride,
So boastful and unruly,
All by his skill and art in war."

It was thus that the distant Western Marches were the first to salute the first hero of the new Northern Power by the title of the Great.

Meanwhile, French statecraft bored more and more deeply down into the rotten Empire. The ten small Imperial cities in Elsass were subjected to the sovereignty of the king; when an act of treason, the foul threads of which are to this day hidden in obscurity, delivered Strassburg also into the hands of Louis. What a day, that fatal 24th of October, 1681, when the new master held his entry! with the citizens of the free Imperial city swearing fidelity on their knees, while German peasants were doing serf's labour outside in the trenches of the citadel! At the porch of the Minster, Bishop Francis Egon von Fürstenberg received the King, thanked him for having again recovered the Cathedral out of the hands of the heretics, and exclaimed,

"Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, since he has seen his Saviour!" Meanwhile, Rebenac, the king's envoy, declared at Berlin that the king had not had the least intention of breaking the peace of the Empire. Cruel acts of maltreatment directed against the Strassburg Protestants formed the worthy close of this for ever shameful episode. Three times over the dynastic policy of the Habsburgs neglected the fairest opportunities of recovering what had been lost, and at last it sacrificed Lothringen also.

Slowly and cautiously the French began to Gallicise their new territories. Years passed before the independent administration of the Lothringian Allemagne was done away with, and more years before the German chancery at the Court of Versailles was abolished. Yet it was precisely in this period of foreign dominion that Elsass sank deep into the heart of the German nation. For there is no book more German than that incomparable one, which tells of the most beautiful of all the mysteries of human existence, of the growth of genius; and there is no picture in Goethe's life of greater warmth and depth than the story of the blissful days of love in Elsass. A ray of love from the Sesenheim parsonage has penetrated into the youthful dreams of every German heart. That

German home, threatened with inundation by Welsh manners and customs, seems to us all like to a sanctuary desecrated. But the merry folk of Elsass whom Goethe knew, fond of the song and the dance, lived carelessly on, troubling themselves but little about their ambiguous political existence, and coming rarely into contact with foreign language and ways of life. The Strassburg University, indeed, already began, in French fashion, to insist more upon practical usefulness than upon depth of knowledge, but it still taught in the German tongue. Through its ornaments Schöpflin and Koch, it maintained a constant intercourse with German Science, and it was frequented by many young men from the neighbouring parts of the Empire, by Goethe, Herder, Lenz, Stilling, Metternich. Even under the oppressive superintendence of royal prætors, the city adhered to its ancient constitution; and a hundred years after its incorporation it remained as little French, as Danzig was Polish under the protection of the Crown of Poland.

It was the Revolution which first made the Strassburgers part of the State, and caused them to share the national feeling of the French. The Revolution united to the French territory the petty German sovereignties of Elsass which still remained, and here, as every-

where else, it destroyed the separate rights of the province. Even the ancient glorious name of the country had to give way before names characteristic of French vanity, *Haut-Rhin* and *Bas-Rhin*—the Lower Rhine where the stream is not yet capable of bearing large vessels! In the tempests of the great Revolution, the people of Elsass, like all the citizens of France, learnt to forget their past. And it is here that the essential and fundamental feature of modern French political sentiment, and the ultimate source of the disease pervading the French State, is to be sought. The nation has broken with its history; it accounts what lies behind the Revolution as dead and done. Thirty years ago the city of Strassburg commenced the publication of its straightforward old chronicles—doubtless a work due to a genuine love of home—but the German, whose past ages are still a living truth to him, reads with an uncomfortable shudder the unsympathetic preface composed by the *maire* Schützenberger. The glorious days of the imperial city are treated of in precisely the same tone as the fact that the Eighth Legion, once upon a time, was stationed at Argentoratum. All that happened before the sacred date of '89 belongs to archæological research, and no bridge remains to connect to-day with yesterday.

Awful and abnormal events were necessary, if so radical a transmutation of political feeling was to be achieved, and hardly anywhere else did the Convention carry on its war of annihilation against the Provinces after so bloody and so merciless a fashion as at Strassburg. The loyal and ponderous German burghers were unable to follow with sufficient swiftness the whimsical spasms of the French mind. The city was enthusiastic in favour of the constitutional monarchy; and it held fast to its faith long after the Parisians had broken the crown in pieces. Then it applauded with its whole heart the rhetorical pathos of the Gironde, after the Parisians had already donned the Jacobin cap. When it fell at last into the power of the Jacobins, a trait of German idealism and of a German sense of equity survived after all in its native demagogues, in Eulogius Schneider and in the shoemaker Jung. Thus the Strassburgers were suspected as Moderates by the Terrorists, and in its rage for equality, and its mad passion for unity, the Convention cast itself with loathsome savageness upon the German city. St. Juste and Lebas declared the guillotine "*en permanence*," in order to "nationalise" Elsass and to purify it from the German barbarians. The German dress was prohibited, the Minster was dedicated

as a Temple of Reason, the red cap was planted on its spire, and the club of the Propaganda proposed in serious earnest the deportation of every citizen not speaking French.

Thus, while the obstinate resistance of the German city passed away, amidst these sanguinary horrors, the peasant population was gained for France by the benefits of the Revolution. German "peasant right" still obtained in the country; the peasant still groaned under the harsh dues he owed to the lord of the soil; in some cases he was still in a condition of serfdom. The night of the fourth of August suddenly made him a free landed proprietor. In part of the interior of France, on the other hand, the system of *métayers*, or some other similar oppressive system of land-tenure, still prevailed, and the new law made but little change in the condition of the rural population. To these things we owe it that the German peasants of France blessed the Revolution, while the French peasantry in the Vendée fought passionately against it. The old obstinate love of liberty of the Alemanni was reawakened; the peasants in Elsass hurried to the standards of the Republic; and during the struggles of those savage days, they drank deep of the new French ideas, which are closely connected with that

contempt for the past of which I have spoken. Henceforth there burnt in them a fanatical love of equality, which loathes as feudalism any and every advantage of birth, however innocent, and the measureless self-consciousness of the Fourth Estate, which in France is unable to forget how the existence of the State once rested on the points of its pikes. On the other hand, Count Wurmser, who commanded the Austrian army before the lines of Weissenburg, was an Elsass nobleman, deeply initiated into the secret intrigues of discontented members of his order. He made no secret of his intention that his good sword should restore the glories of the squirearchy *(Junkerthum)*. Thus the war against Germany appeared in the eyes of the Elsass peasantry to be a war for the liberty of their persons and for their bit of soil.

Finally the population gave itself up to the charm of the fame of the soldiers' Emperor, who knew so thoroughly how to make use of the warlike vigour of these Germans. The Germanic Empire came to a miserable end. The Elsassers Pfeffel and Matthieu acted as middlemen in the dirty barter, when our Princes shared the shreds of the Empire among themselves. The last feeling of respect for the German State was at an end. When Germany rose at

last, and the allies invaded France, the people of Elsass once more deemed the blessings of the Revolution to be in danger. The fortified places, bravely defended by citizens and soldiers, held out for a long time. Armed bands of peasants carried on a guerilla warfare in the Vosges; they crucified captive German soldiers, and perpetrated such inhuman abominations as to make Rückert lament the ungermanised manners and morals of the land. Numerous pictures in the churches and old-fashioned burghers' houses remain to recall this war of the people against the *étrangers*. The wretched period of the raid upon the demagogues in Germany followed. German fugitives found protection and refuge in the land across the Rhine, Strassburg presses printed what the German censorship prohibited, and the man of Elsass looked with contempt upon his ancient home as upon a land of impotence and slavery. And according to the constant law that an unnatural condition of the people begets strange popular diseases, it was precisely this conquered German land which became the nursery of Chauvinism. The course of the Rhine, the Saar and the Mosel indicated intercourse with Germany as necessary to these districts. They hungered after new conquests; boasted of surpassing all other provinces of France in

"patriotism;" were specially fond of sending their sons into the army; and two years ago, the war-loving Lothringians were alone ready to accept the proposal of universal military service which the self-love of the French rejected. A clear picture, and one simply unintelligible to a German, is presented of this French feeling in the frontier-lands in the much-read "national novels" of the two Elsass-Lothringians, Erckmann and Chatrian, the apostles of peace among the poets of France. What genuinely German men and women are their worthy Pfalzburgers! In language and sentiment they are Germans, but they have lost the last trace of a remembrance of their ancient connection with the Empire. They are enthusiastic for the *tricolore;* they bitterly hate the *Prussien;* and the narrators themselves—write in French.

Well may we Germans be seized with awe, when we witness the re-awakening of the blind fury of 1815 in Gunstett and Weissenburg; when we find these German men raving, in the German tongue, against the "German dogs," the "stinking Prussians," and raging like wild beasts against their flesh and blood. And yet we have no right to sit in judgment on this deluded population, which, notwithstanding everything, is among the most vigorous of the German races.

Arndt himself found good reason for defending the men of Elsass against Rückert's bitter complaints. What raises our indignation in these unhappy men, after all, is nothing else than the old German particularism, the fatal impulse of every German to be something else and something better than his German neighbour—to deem his own little country the sacred land of the Centre, and to stand fast, with blind fidelity, by the standard which he has once taken up. It is true that, in this case, our old hereditary German disease appears in the most revolting form possible, under circumstances of the most unnatural character. Look at the unhappy, misused men who fell like assassins, at Wörth and Forbach, on the rear of the German warriors. They are the Germans, who have had no share in the great resurrection of our nation during the last two centuries, and we should, all of us, be like them, were there no Prussia in existence. The man of Elsass is not a mere Frenchman; he has no desire to be so; he views the Welshman with suspicion, often with hatred; he feels self-conscious as a member of the little chosen people, which surpasses all Frenchmen in industry and warlike vigour, as it surpasses all Germans in the fact that it is French. Other Germans, too, have been known, in other times, to take pride in displaying their

German fidelity to the kings of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, or England; and the men of Stettin fought once for the Swedish crown, against the great Elector, in even bitterer earnest than the men of Elsass of to-day. It is only from the hands of the Prussian State, as it grew into its strength, that we have recovered the gift of a common country.

And where were the people of Elsass to learn to esteem our German ways of life? What sights met them immediately outside their gates? The ridiculous comedy of the petty States, and the gambling-tables of Baden, at which German goodnature bowed humbly down before French immorality. The old Empire to which they had once loyally adhered had disappeared; of the young State which was arising in glory they knew nothing. How long ago is it since public opinion, among ourselves, deplored as the fall of Germany what was really Germany's awakening? How long since there existed a French, and a Habsburg, but not a German, view of German history? As recently as the commencement of the century, the ordinary German patriot used to seek the final cause of German disunion in the genesis of the Prussian State. And pray what was the picture of Germany which our Radicals, following in the footsteps of Heine, were in

the habit of sketching, only forty years ago? The German nation was supposed to be partial to talking philosophy and to drinking beer; but it was otherwise harmless, and it had the tendencies of a lackey. Its petty States were blessed with a few ideas of liberty, which they had picked up from the great Revolution and the great Napoleon, while in the north there was unfortunately the State of the drill-sergeant and of feudalism—the robber-State of the *Hoberaux*. It is this caricature of Germany which circulates to this day in France. The Second Empire, which has performed so many involuntary services to Germany, has, indeed, to some extent shaken the self-consciousness of the men of Elsass themselves. A few thinking men have recognised the fact, which is clear as the light of day, that any and every German State is at present incomparably freer than Imperial France. But the mass of the people, misguided by an indescribably stupid provincial Press, was left without any tidings of the immense change which was being accomplished in Germany, and lived on in its old dreams.

Has a new and individual civilisation come into life in this German race, saturated with French feelings and opinions? The people of Elsass, accustomed, after the manner of Germans to make a virtue of necessity, often

delight to declare that their country forms the connecting link between the Romance and the Germanic world, and that, for this reason, it is of greater importance at the present day to the progress of European culture than formerly when it was a territory of the Germanic Empire. No man has developed this idea more delicately and felicitously than the highly cultivated Mülhausener, Ch. Dollfus. About the year 1860 it appeared as if the province were really about to fulfil this office of mediation. The *Revue Germanique*, written chiefly by men from Elsass, endeavoured to offer the French a faithful picture of German science; the *Temps*, also conducted by them, laboured to arrive at a fair judgment of our political life. At that time even Frenchmen of old Celtic blood remarked, that nothing but the unearthing of the Germanic forces which had been half buried could supply the French soil with new creative power; and we Germans used to watch these unusual efforts with honest delight. But all such attempts have been utterly wrecked. It could not well have been otherwise. The pleasure which the French took in the works of the German intellect always rested on the tacit assumption, that we continued to resemble the old caricature, that we were still a people devoid of political organisation, a people of

poets and thinkers. No sooner had the Bohemian victories shown the power of the German State than a change ensued in French life, to which we have failed to pay sufficient attention here. The influence of German ideas halted; the *Revue Germanique* died long ago; the *Temps* has displayed precisely the same captiousness and hostility against the new German Confederation as has been shown by the rest of the French papers: and after all the awful experiences of the last few weeks, we can expect nothing but a still deeper estrangement for the immediate future.

Was Elsass in truth a connecting link between Germany and France? A mutual giving and taking is surely an indispensable element of such a connexion. What have we received from the people of Elsass? What have they been to us? Their higher intellects were simply lost to German national life, they became Frenchmen with a slight colouring of German culture; like Dollfus himself, they served the foreigner, not us. The loss of the German provinces would be of infinitely more importance to France than is implied in the diminution of the eighty-nine *Départements* by three. It would not only be a terrible moral blow—for these territories are the pride of the nation, the oft-contested prize of ancient victories, the famed *terre classique de*

la France—but a loss of intellectual forces which it would be utterly impossible to make good. It is astonishing to find in every large town in France, everywhere and in every station in life, the industrious, clever and trustworthy sons of Elsass. The population of the *Département Bas-Rhin*, although it is healthy and fertile in the German fashion, considerably diminished during the decade from 1850 to 1860, in consequence of the emigration *en masse* into the French cities. Are we to regard this regular absorption of German forces by the French people as a healthy action and reaction—now that we possess the power of putting an end to this morbid state of affairs? Switzerland is really a land of transition and of mediation. There, three nations, united by means of a free and flexible constitution, learn how to appreciate and deal considerately with one another. But the centralisation and the domineering national spirit of France cannot allow a province either an independent culture or a separate language. Official statistics in France, as their director, Legoyt, has often openly confessed, disdain on principle to enquire into the relations between the different languages. The State assumes that every Frenchman understands French. The world is not permitted to learn how many millions of Basques,

Bretons, Provençals, Flemings and Germans have no acquaintance with the language of the State: the popular tongue differing from it is to be degraded into a dialect, into the speech of the uncultivated. The French bureaucracy in Elsass has laboured in the direction of this goal with a ruthless zeal, and so fanatically, that Napoleon III. was at times obliged to moderate the clumsiness of his too eager officials. Superior education is entirely given in French. An attempt has even been made recently, by the introduction of French educational nurseries for the young *(Kindergärten)*, to estrange the children from their tenderest years from their mother-tongue. Those who speak pure high-German may sometimes find it easier to make themselves understood by half-educated men in Elsass if they help themselves out with French; for people of this class have lost the free and facile use of any form of speech except the dialect of their native district. The attempt to degrade the language of a nation which is one of the standard-bearers of civilization, into the rudeness of the Celtic *patois* of the Bretons, is sheer insanity and a sin against nature. The proverb of our homely ancestors must remain eternally true: "So German heart and Welshman's tongue, strong man, lame steed are suited wrong." The foreign

language which has been forced upon them has done unspeakable harm to the upper classes of Elsass in their moral feeling and in their spiritual life, and has impressed upon the intellectual life of the province the character of a bastard culture which is neither fish nor flesh. What unhappy creatures these German boys are, who pass by in their gold-rimmed Lyceum caps under the guardianship of an elegant *abbé*, and whose German souls are bidden to find edification in Boileau and Racine, while they speak to the servants in a horrible Welsh perversion of their native language, the language of Goethe.

In the struggle between the independent languages of highly civilized nations, flexibility of form is unfortunately apt to gain the victory over depth and thoroughness of culture. The national character of the rising generation ultimately depends upon the mothers; and women find it hard to withstand the charm of brilliant form. As a rule, woman—more loyal than man in good things as well as in evil—adheres more firmly than he does to ancestral ways; the women of Elsass become Welsh faster than the men. This is proved by ocular demonstration, and it is confirmed by the returns reported from all the popular libraries in the province, which show that the women hardly

read any books but French. The language of the State, of good society, and of important commercial transactions, is French. The language of the books and newspapers is the same; for it is better to pass over in compassionate silence the barbarous German translation which the Frenchman, M. Schneegans, is in the habit of placing alongside of the French text of his *Courrier du Bas-Rhin*. Whoever has seen three generations of an Elsass family side by side, must have had the growing Gallicisation of the upper classes brought palpably before him. If one reminds these people of the glorious German past, a confident "we are Frenchmen" helps them over all argument; and if they are men of learning, they are not unlikely, like the *maire* Schützenberger aforesaid, to add a few profound phrases on the mutability of all things human, as destructive even of national life. The public service, the settlement of numerous Frenchmen in the province, and manifold family and business connexions, all hasten this unnatural degeneration. Of the great families of the land, some have crossed over to the right bank, like the Schaumburgs, the Böcklins, the Türkheims; the rest have, almost without exception, betaken themselves to French ways, like the Reinachs, the Andlaus, the Vogt

von Hunolsteins. It was a Zorn von Bulach, a scion of the famous old house of free imperial citizens *(Reichsbürger)*, who recently demanded, in a stormy Chauvinist speech in the *Corps Législatif*, the fortification of Hüningen, to prevent the fatherland falling a prey to the Germans.

In contrast with this Gallicisation of the educated classes, how glorious the faithful adherence of the Alemannic peasant to the usages of his ancestors appears. Here, among the simple folk, where culture is held of no account and the whole intellectual life is comprehended in the moral feelings, the German tongue continues to hold unbounded sway, and even among the higher classes it has frequently remained the language of the feelings and of the domestic hearth. The German wanderer who enters a village in the Vosges, is saluted at first by some official ordinance or other in French, or by an advertisement painted on the wall by the great Paris advertising firms, *Chocolat Ménier* and *Au Pauvre Diable*. In the village itself everything is German; red waistcoats, big fur-caps and three-cornered hats, popular costumes of a primitive antiquity which survive only in the remote valleys of the Schwarzwald. The name Welsh *(Wälsch)* is often regarded even yet as a term of

abuse. The *maire*, the *cantonnier*, and a few of the younger people whose wanderings as handicraftsmen have carried them to a great distance, are frequently the only persons who speak the foreign tongue with facility. All the public decrees with which the people are seriously meant to become acquainted, must be read out in both languages. To teach the children in French is either impossible, or they forget in a few years what it has cost them so much trouble to acquire. The peasant of the Sundgau contemplates the storks' nest on his thatch with the same pleasure as the Ditmarsher; he is on as intimate terms with his stork as the other with his *Hudbar;* and he receives the payment for lodging, which the bird annually throws down, with equal conscientiousness. If he reads anything at all, he reads the jests of the "Hobbling Messenger" *(des hinkenden Boten)* like his neighbour in the Schwarzwald across the river. A rich mine of primitive German legends and usages yet remains among the woodmen up in the Wasgau, who push the trunks of the trees, in the winter time, on mighty sleighs *(Schlitten)*, down the steep precipice. The Welshman bestows on these sturdy fellows the exquisite name of *Schlitteurs*.

But the mightiest of all the forces at the root of our

German ways is Protestantism, which is the strong shield of the German language and of German life here, as in the mountains of Transylvania, and on the distant shores of the Baltic. After all, it is the free life of different creeds side by side with one another which remains the strong root of our modern German culture; and in this essential characteristic, which distinguishes us both from the Catholic south and the Lutheran north, Elsass, which is divided between the confessions *(paritätisch)*, fully participates. So long as the peasant continues to sing "*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*," from a German hymn-book, German life will not perish in the Wasgau. The loving and energetic spirit of old Spener, and, after him, of the worthy Oberlin, the benefactor of the Steinthal, survives to this day in the excellent evangelical pastors of Elsass; and perhaps they are the only men in the country who secretly long for its return to Germany. Any loyal love, on the part of the shamefully-persecuted Evangelical church, towards the land of the *Dragonnades*, and of the *War of the Cevennes*, must have been out of the question at all times. German science —the free and fearless spirit of inquiry of the Tübingen school—prevails among the admirable scholars of the Protestant Faculty at Strassburg, some of whom

still lecture in German. They owe nothing to the French but an active practical sense, which seeks to impress the truth which their own minds have recognised on the life and constitution of their congregations.

What is it, speaking generally, that is healthy and energetic in Elsass? what is it that elevates these districts above the dark mists of self-indulgence and priestly obscurantism, which overhang most of the remaining provinces of France? The German nature of Elsass, and nothing else. The active civic spirit of its inhabitants, and the ineradicable impulse towards self-government, which even the artifices of Napoleonic prefects could not wholly banish, and which refused to bow its head before the monarchical socialism of the Second Empire, are German. Let the worthy members of the *Société Industrielle de Mulhouse* believe as long as they choose that they are Frenchmen in body and soul, and set up the inscriptions *Place Napoléon* and *Rue Napoléon* at the street-corners of their artizan-town. That admirable enterprize of free civic spirit could only have arisen on Germanic soil, just as the great city workhouse of Ostwald, near Strassburg, could only have been founded by a German city. The *cités ouvrières* in French towns, in Lille, for

example, owe their origin to the State. The active care of the communes and fathers of families for popular education, which has at least succeeded in bringing about this result, that on an average there are, of a hundred unmarried persons in the *Haut-Rhin*, only from six to seven, and in the *Bas-Rhin* only from two to three, unable to write, is altogether German. This seems poor enough in comparison with the state of things in Germany, but it is brilliant in comparison with that in France. The spirit of the popular libraries and singing-clubs, which used to be constantly at feud with the Prefects, is German. Notwithstanding the Welsh tongue which it uses, the scholarly culture which produces such good fruit in the *Revue Critique* and in the works of the provincial historians, is German. Even among the French-speaking classes, have we not the more natural, straightforward, youthful way of German life, which has been infected indeed, but not yet destroyed, by Celtic immorality. Are not the military virtues of the man of Elsass German too? Is the same thing not true of his loyalty and discipline—of the close application to the military instruction of each individual soldier, and the delight in accurate firing, which make him alone, among the soldiers of France, capable of an effective partisan war

(*Parteigängerkrieg*), and which have created a species of volunteer popular army—the *franctireurs*—in his part of the country alone.

But, alas! when we praise the indestructible German nature of the man of Elsass, the subject of our praise declines to receive it. He adheres to his conviction that he is no Suabian, and that all Suabians are yellow-footed. He was introduced by France sooner than we Germans have been into the grand activity of the modern economical world. To France he owes a most admirable organisation of the means of commercial intercourse, a wide market, the influx of capital on a great scale, and a high rate of wages, which, to this day draws daily labourers in crowds at harvest-time from the fields of Baden across the Rhine. From the French he has learnt a certain *savoir-faire;* his industrial activity, upon the whole, stands higher than that of his German neighbour; and in special branches—in nursery gardening for instance, he presents a marked contrast to the easy-going indifference of the natives of Baden. The son of Elsass is bound to his great State not merely by ancient loyalty and pride, but by material bonds, the power of which we, in our freer political life, generally fail duly to appreciate. A bureaucratic centralisation possesses this advantage after all,

among a thousand sins, that it penetrates like a binding mortar into every joint of the social edifice, and renders it unspeakably difficult to break one of its stones out of the wall. What labour will be requisite before the threads which lead across from Strassburg and Colmar to Paris are all cut! The *fonctionnomanie* of the French, their anxiety to make a profit out of the State, even were it by means of a *bureau de tabac*, has penetrated as far as these frontier lands. A countless host of officials, pensioners and veterans, swarms in this province. All the great institutions of intercourse and credit are in reality State establishments. What a power lies in the hands of the Great Eastern Railway, which, although a private company in name is in fact connected closely with the State! If the district is given up to Germany, and this railway remains what it is, every pointsman and guard on the line will contribute to the French propaganda.

The smallest amount of resistance will probably be offered to the reconquest in Lower Elsass, where a third of the population is Protestant, and where a vigorous intercourse is carried on with Baden and the Palatinate. The state of affairs on the Upper Rhine is far less promising. A powerful clergy is there, adding fuel to the hatred of the lively and excitable

people against Germany, and it finds no counterpoise in the Protestant portion of the population, which amounts only to a tithe. The manufactories of Mülhausen have their chief market in France, although a considerable business has been done in the calico and muslin trade of the place at the Leipzig fairs since the recent treaties of commerce. The German State is repugnant to the old reminiscences of this Swiss city. Its patrician families assiduously display their French sentiments. Its masses of working men, thrown together from long distances, and who come, for the most part, from Germany, have always welcomed the hollow pathos of the Paris demagogues. But it is in German Lothringen that we are threatened by the most embittered hostility. In a population almost exclusively Catholic, German ways of thought and life have never found so grand a development as in Elsass; and for more than a century they have been abused by all the evil artifices of the French bureaucracy—most cynically of all in the old Luxemburg districts round Diedenhofen; besides which their ordinary intercourse takes the peasantry to two French towns, to Metz and Nanzig.

Most assuredly, the task of reuniting there the broken links between the ages is one of the heaviest

that has ever been imposed upon the political forces of our nation. Capital and culture, those faithful allies of the German cause in Posen and in Schleswig-Holstein, are our opponents. German ways of thought and life have been terribly discredited in the upper classes of these western marches. What we deem horrible, they deem sacred. They remember with pride, how it was at Strassburg that Rouget de l'Isle once composed those burning lines which threatened the enemies of France, the Germans, with death and destruction; and how the soldiers' Emperor passed out to his war against us through the gate of Austerlitz. The city which fought as a heroine in the spiritual battles of the Reformation, boasts to-day in her own phrase, "*de porter fièrement l'épée de la France.*" What appears ridiculous to us seems to them to speak for itself. They are not ashamed to call themselves Monsieur Schwilgué or Stöcklé. They allow the venerable names of their towns to be changed into Welsh perversions, like Wasselonne, Cernay, and Sélestat. They obediently accept the indescribably absurd Obernay (for Oberehnheim), and consider it fine to write "*antwergmestres*" when they are speaking, in their French historical works of the masters of the old guilds (*Meister der alten*

Zünfte). They are astonished at our shrugging our shoulders, as we contemplate the monument in honour of the industrial grandees of the place, on the market-place at Rappoltsweiler, and see enumerated on it, in the style of the tables issued from the Prefectures, the names Meyer, Jaques, Muller, Etienne, &c. What to us seems freedom, to them appears oppression. While taking part in the life of a State, whose parties bow beneath despotism as their taskmaster, without an exception, they have lost all perception for the truth, that every healthy kind of freedom imposes burdens and duties. They look with repugnance upon the fundamental principle of the German State, the duty of all men to serve the State in arms, and the right of every local community (*Gemeinde*) to manage its own affairs. Yet with all their devotion, they are not regarded by the Welsh as their equals. The Frenchman contrives cleverly to turn the fresh vigour of the man of Elsass to the best advantage for himself; but he laughs in secret at these honest *têtes carrées*. It is simply impossible to domesticate the modern French art of undergoing a grand revolution of political thought and opinion once in every ten years among these tough Suabians. Even in our own days, just as in those of the First Revolution, it was with

hesitation and unwillingly that the men of Elsass followed the periodically recurring general Desertion of the Flag, which is characteristic of the party-life of the French. When the President Louis Napoleon was engaged in his notorious Emperor's tour through France, and the whole country sang the praises of the new idol, he was confronted by sturdy Republican pride in Elsass alone. Loyalty of this kind is unintelligible to the Frenchman. Even Duruy, who stands nearer to our culture than most of his fellow-countrymen, remarks, condescendingly, of the population of Elsass, after a few words of well-merited encomiums: *mais elle delaisse trop lentement son mauvais jargon allemand et son intolérance religieuse—Mauvais jargon allemand!*— this is what is said of the mother-tongue, the straightforward Allemannic, which went so warm and kindly to the heart of the youthful Goethe! *Intolérance réligieuse,* this is how they describe faithful adherence to the evangelical faith! Such is the distance which separates the French from the German members of their State.

It is precisely in this that there lies for us a pledge of hope. The source of German life is choked, but it is not dried-up. Tear these men out of the foreign soil, and they are as German as ourselves. The men of

Elsass and Lothringen who have emigrated to America range themselves regularly with the Germans, and like the latter are at this day joyously hailing our victories. The German spirit of the house of Ludwig Uhland met hardly anywhere so clear an echo as in the songs of August and Adolf Stober of Elsass. How touching is the admonition coming from lips such as these to the Strassburgers:

"Around your sons shall wind
Loyalty's bond from hand to hand,
And ever shall them bind
Unto the German fatherland!"

And in Kleeburg there, not far from the Gaisberg, which the heroes of Lower Silesia stormed in the awful fray, stood the cradle of Ludwig Häusser—the loyal man, who was the first to relate to us in the spirit of a true German the history of our War of Liberation. In times past, other German districts have been sunk in depths of degeneration as deep as that of Elsass to-day. Under the rotten dominion of the Crozier, and the iron yoke of the First Empire, the burghers of Köln and Koblenz had hardly been reached by far off tidings of the triumphs of Frederick and the poems of Schiller, of all that was great and genuine in modern German history. Ten years of Prussian government sufficed to recover these lost ones to German life. If at this

day foreign ways have roots incomparably deeper in Colmar and Mülhausen than was the case of old on the Lower Rhine, the vigour and self-consciousness of the German nation, on the other hand, have immeasurably increased since that time. The people of Elsass are already beginning to doubt the invincibility of their nation, and at all events to divine the mighty growth of the German Empire. Perverse obstinacy, and a thousand French intrigues, creeping in the dark, will make every step on the newly conquered soil difficult for us: but our ultimate success is certain, for on our side fights what is stronger than the lying artifices of the stranger—nature herself and the voice of common blood.

III.

THE CLAIMS OF PRUSSIA.

WHO is strong enough to rule these lost lands, and to recover them, by a salutary discipline, for German life? Prussia, and Prussia alone. I am well aware that there are many sagacious persons in the North who utter words of warning, and entreat us to leave that awkward question for the present, and, above all, to abstain, at this moment, from awakening the wrath of conflicting parties which has hardly been put to sleep. Singular error! The question which arises at this point is elevated above all parties; it is the question, whether a German peace is to follow this German war, whether the peace and the war are to be one in fashion and in spirit, whether, as the German swords struck their blows only for the sake of the great Fatherland, the statutes of the peace are to satisfy the demands of German security and honour, and not the

miserable suggestions of particularism. This is precisely the moment in which it is the duty of the Press to speak plainly, while the brand of the nation's sacred wrath is still being forged in the fire, and before the glorious unanimity of this war has been overgrown by the petty play of parties. The eye of our nation is clear-sighted, and its heart is wide enough, if rationally instructed, to understand what is indispensable for the security of Germany. Should a traitor here or there be induced by the open expression of those national demands, the rejection of which is impossible, prematurely to doff his mask and to lift up, once more his old favourite cry, "Rather French than Prussian," the defection of such gentry would do no harm to the German cause.

If the war progresses on the grand scale in which it has commenced, the leader of the Germans will conclude peace in the name of the allies, and cause whatever cessions of territory have to be demanded to be made to the allies in common. Farther arrangements in the conquered territory must then be left as a matter for mutual discussion between the German confederates. We Germans should be most unwilling to exhibit the dreary remains of our utter disunion to a peace congress, and to shew a contemptuous

Europe that our political unity is very far from being as complete, as yet, as the unity of the German army. But if these discussions should not lead rapidly and harmoniously to a sound conclusion, a resolute and unanimous public opinion would have to lighten the difficulties of the task. What was it, besides the jealousy of foreign countries, which hampered the German statesmen of 1815? The uncertainty and confusion that reigned in the national mind. One party wanted to give the Duchy of Elsass to the Crown Prince of Würtemberg, and another to the Archduke Charles. Arndt himself insisted only on securing the freedom of the German river. Let us show that we have learned in these great times, to live, while our fathers only knew how to die for Germany, and that the unity of the national will has succeeded that indeterminate sort of national oneness which inspired the men of the Second Peace of Paris.

The current talk in the North is, "Let us reward the South Germans for their loyalty." This is one of those vague fashions of speech, which is due to sincere feeling, but which, in times of popular excitement, might easily lead to dangerous results. Oh! if the North Germans who echo these phrases, and fancy themselves very magnanimous and noble in so doing,

could but see how the eyes of honest and clear-sighted South Germans flash out with anger at such words. We want no reward, they say; if people want to reward us, let them at all events not reward the particularism of the Courts which we held down with such effort. I speak under the impression of earnest warnings, which reach me from South German friends, and which entreat me to defend the interests of South Germany in this Review. The course of the argument which these politicians press on behalf of South Germany, is plain and not open to question.

France, they say, will not and cannot honourably conclude peace, until her army and her administration are entirely changed. Until a thoroughly different popular education has built up a new nation round it, the French people will never in earnest renounce their natural boundaries, or their illusion that the weakness of Germany is their strength. We in Upper Germany cannot lead our lives in quiet, or witness in contemptuous confidence the feverish rage of these Gallic vandals, so long as Elsass has not been placed under a strong protecting power. The Prussian Eagle alone is able to keep his grip of what he has once pounced upon. In any weaker grasp, the border country would be but a temporary possession. We know better than

our friends in the North do, the strength of the resistance which will rise up in Strassburg and Mülhausen against their Germanisation. Prussian territory must be wrapped, like a protecting mantle, round all our threatened boundaries from Wesel past Metz and Saarlouis, down to Strassburg and Belfort. Prussia may not always be led by strong men. She will certainly not be led always by men of genius. The time may come when Prussian particularism, which is out of heart at present, may again say to itself, "Is the shirt not nearer the skin than the coat? Is it absolutely necessary that North Germany should always defend South Germany?" Such questions ought to be impossible in the Germany of the future. It is in that view that we wish to bind Prussia to us by the only bond which is always sure in politics, the bond of its own vital interests. We have always regarded it as a misfortune, that the State which leads Germany should be, in appearance at least, exclusively North German, but the priceless opportunity to leaven it with South German life is given us, so as to do away with the misleading and arbitrary distinction between North and South for ever. Once before, in one of the pettiest periods of its history, Prussia filled the little South German Anspach-Baireuth with Prussian political

feeling. To-day, in the splendour of power and fame, she could accomplish a similar task with a like success. It will be the healing of the German Empire, if our leading power learns to like and to value South German ways in their home, if the citizen forces of her western, and the still immature social conditions of her eastern provinces, find their counterpoise—in one word, if Prussia includes and reconciles within herself all the opposites of German life.

What have people in the North to oppose to such solid arguments? Nothing but the self-sufficient phrase, that Prussia is strong enough to care for no annexation of territory. How magnanimous it sounds!—but the indolence and pettiness of Particularism lies behind it. Which of the two lines of policy would be the loftier or the more German? Is Prussia to enter into a suitable engagement, flattering to the vanity of the Court of Munich, and then to observe, at a comfortable distance, Bavaria struggling to subdue her mutinous province; or, is she herself to undertake that Watch upon the Rhine, which she alone can keep, and decisively to take a province which will bring nothing at first but trouble and resistance to its new masters? Nothing but an exaggerated delicacy, a false magnanimity, have hitherto prevented the North German Press from de-

manding what is necessary, and what the South German papers, for example, the courageous *Schwäbische Volkszeitung*, have long been urging. Every other plan which has been suggested for the future of these border countries is foolish, so foolish that it requires some self-command to induce one to refute it. What is the use of attempting to answer the suggestion that Elsass and Lothringen should form a neutral State? Has Europe not had enough of that already in the disgusting spectacle of the "*Nation Luxembourgeoise.*" Only the brain of an English Manchester man, surrounded by the mists he blows from his pipe of peace, could conceive such extraordinary bubbles. No wonder that every enemy of Germany should approve of the suggestion. No better way has yet been thought of to enable France to recover all that she has lost.

The proposal to entrust this outwork of Germany to a secondary State appears scarcely more unreasonable. One would think we were hurled back out of the great year of 1870 into the times of the Federal Diet. We seem again to hear those wise thinkers of the *Eschenheimer Gasse*, who kept warning us so earnestly against the flames of centralisation, while the marsh-water of petty-Statedom was rising above our shoulders,—those gallant Rifleman patriots, who shouted so lustily for the

unity of Germany,—but with Nürnberg as its capital! Prince and people in Baden have acquitted themselves nobly in trying times; and we can now fully comprehend, and that perhaps for the first time, what it cost them to maintain an honourable national policy here for four years in face of the enemy. Are we, in return, to impose a burden on that State which could not fail to crush it? The plan of founding an Upper Rhine kingdom of Baden proceeds from nothing but a too conscientious study of the map; and an old North German mistake has procured for it a few adherents in the North. As Baden has reckoned among its sons a long line of distinguished politicians, from Rotteck and Liebenstein down to Mathy and Roggenbach, the men of the North have accustomed themselves to expectations, founded on the intellectual power of the country, which no State of the third rank could possibly fulfil. In Baden itself people are more modest. Every reasonable man shudders at the thought of a Diet of Carlsruhe, half made up of the representatives of Elsass. If they allied themselves with the same party in Elsass, who could control the strong native Ultramontane and Radical parties which an intelligent liberal majority keeps in order at present? Such a State would delight the eyes of a map-drawer, as the

kingdom of the Netherlands did, when it was welded out of Belgium and Holland; but, like that, it would be a political impossibility.

The government of Baden no doubt regards the prospect of an acquisition, which would be the ruin of the country, with sufficient wisdom and patriotism. All the more must it be listened to with respect, as it is most nearly concerned in the matter, when it protests decisively against any increase of Bavaria by Elsass. I shall not grope in the filth of a petty past; but it is impossible for people in Carlsruhe to forget that the desires of Bavaria for the Baden palatinate disturbed the Grand Duchy for a whole generation, while Prussia was all that time its honourable protector. Would our boundaries be safe in Bavarian hands? Let us picture to ourselves the Bavarian government under a king less honestly German than Ludwig II., surrounded on all sides, as it would be, by the insubordinate province, kept in a constant state of irritation by France, until at last the bad neighbour returns in a favourable hour with the proposal: Take all Baden and Würtemberg, and give us back our own. Even a State has need to pray: Lead me not into temptation! What are all compacts and Federal constitutions against the plain fact of the possession of the land! God be praised, a

result so unworthy as I am describing is little to be feared in New Germany! The noble blood that reddens the plains of Woerth and Weissenburg bound the armies of Prussia and Bavaria in a close alliance. No new Lord Castlereagh can step forward, as his prototype did fifty years ago, to tell us scornfully that the loosely compacted German Bund is not able to defend Elsass. Yet the troublesome question presses on us, Whether Bavaria possesses the intellectual and political power which are necessary to fuse Elsass into union with itself? Facts familiar to every one supply the answer. What was it that, in 1849, saved the German-minded Palatinate on the left bank of the Rhine for the kingdom of Bavaria? The sword of Prussia. The results of Bavarian administration in the Palatinate are, to put it mildly, extremely modest. Wanting in all creative power, she has indolently adopted far too many of the Napoleonic institutions of the province. It is precisely this despotic administration of the French which must be rooted out of Elsass. The people of the Palatinate are German, body and soul, and yet they have remained half strange, half hostile, to the German State; and their representatives almost always sat in the Diet at Munich as a close party of fellow-countrymen. The feeble and unnatural body of the

kingdom had not strength sufficient to break down the separate life of the province. And it is just that breaking down of a life of unnatural separation that is our most serious duty in Elsass.

Let no man tell us that it matters very little in the new Germany to what single State a district may be assigned, since the Munich Parliament must henceforth be content to play the part of a provincial Diet. To say so is to assume, foolishly, that a work has been already completed which can only develop slowly in the course of many years. The powerful excitement of this war will certainly find some statesmanlike expression, but we cannot yet foresee the form which it may take. The unity of the armies, which has manifested itself so splendidly in the war, will continue, beyond all question, in time of peace also. From that follows, as an immediate corollary, a common diplomacy, and from that again, a collective German parliament. The north German Confederation must and will remain true to those two fixed principles which it laid down, not in fear of France, but from a true sense of the conditions of Germany. It will declare then, as it has done before, that we demand the entrance of no South German State; and we shall not loosen the strong and dearly bought compactness of

our Confederation in the very smallest degree. It is by no means certain that the Bavarian Court will at once enter the Confederation on these conditions. If it should, there will still remain very essential differences between the separate States. The province of internal administration can hardly be affected in the slightest degree by Federal legislation.

The administration, the whole new hierarchy of the government offices—the communes, the schools, must all of them be organised in the best possible way in Elsass-Lothringen. The Prussian administration has shown indisputably, on the Rhine, that it is superior, with all its defects, to the French, or to that of the little States. Compare the later history of the three great Rhenish towns, which are limited in their natural development by fortress walls. In what wretchedness and beggary did Cologne stand in the days of Napoleon in comparison with the golden Mainz and the prosperous Strassburg! How far the stately metropolis of the Lower Rhine surpasses both her sisters to-day! All of that is due to the blessing of Prussian laws. Prussia alone can undertake the remorseless sweeping away of the French officials in Elsass, which is indispensable, and replace the foreign powers by vigorous home ones. Prussia alone can steadfastly

maintain the state of siege which, we may easily imagine, may be necessary for a time in some of the districts of the forlorn land. The worst fault of the Prussian administration, its perpetual scribbling, will seem innocent to the people of Elsass, after the corruption and the statistical mania of the prefectures. A powerful State, which has impressed its spirit on the inhabitants of the Rhine country and the people of Posen, will know how to reconcile the separate life of the half-French Germans; and just as Prussian parties have spread themselves immediately, in three or four years, over every part of the new provinces, the people of Elsass will one day be ready to ally themselves with the various parties of Prussia, and cease to form a separate fraction in the Parliament at Berlin.

The peace must break many a bond, which was dear to those borderers. Can Germany venture to add the useless cruelty of separating them from each other, and giving Metz to Prussia, and Strassburg to Bavaria? The peace will cut the people of Elsass off from a powerful nation, in their connexion with which they found their honour and their pride. Can Germany humiliate them in the hour of their violent liberation, and raise the modest white and blue, or the red and yellow flag where waved the tricolore of the Revolu-

tion, which once conquered the world? No! these Germans have been accustomed to the larger views of a great State; they will not endure being anything but Prussians, if they must cease to be Frenchmen. Let us give them something in exchange for what they have lost;—a great and glorious State, a powerful capital, a free competition for all the offices and honours of a great Empire. In the uniformity of a great State, they have lost all taste for those bewildering conditions of South German political life, which we ourselves often hardly understand. They might learn to be Prussian citizens, but they would think it as ridiculous, if they were handed over to a King in Munich, and to a supreme King in Berlin. Here, in fact, there is no place for those half measures and artificial relations. Nothing but the simple and intelligible reality of the German State will serve. Everything like "Federal fortresses," or "territory acknowledging no authority between itself and the Empire"—or by whatever name the too-clever-by-half devices of gambling Dilettantes are known—is utterly out of the question.

We, who are old champions of German unity, have for six years been demanding the incorporation of the Elbe Duchies into the Prussian State, although the

hereditary claim of a German princely house stood in the way. Is this Review to plead to-day that a little State should insinuate itself into the far more dangerously threatened Duchies of the Rhine, where no claim of right bars the claim of Prussia? Once give up the standpoint of German unity, and cease to ask only what is for the benefit of the great Fatherland; once begin to reckon, like a shopkeeper, what part of the prizes of victory should be assigned to each of the confederate allies, and one must be driven to the manifest absurdity, that the border territories should be split up into I know not how many fragments. It would be a worthy repetition of that ludicrous subdivision of the Department of the Saar, which brought the sarcasms of Europe on us in 1815. At that time, when the consciousness of the strength of Prussia was yet in its infancy, Gneisenau could still propose that Prussia should hand over Elsass to Bavaria, and receive the territory of Anspach-Baireuth in exchange. All such barters of territory are out of the question to-day. The nation knows how casually its internal boundary lines have been drawn. It tolerates those barriers of separation; but it is with a quiet dislike, and without any serious confidence, and it looks unfavourably on any attempt to draw similar lines anew.

Prussia is not in a condition to hand over its own share of the rewards of victory to each separate country and people. If it were really so—if the friendliness of the Court of Munich to the Confederation were to be bought only by the cession to them of at least northern Elsass, including Hagenau and Weissenberg, what an ugly escape it would be out of our difficulties! how repulsive to the people of Elsass! But what is essential—the uninterrupted boundary-line stretching from Diedenhofen to Mülhausen—can never be given up by Prussia without serious injury to Germany.

We are told in warning tones of the objections of Europe. If you go to the foreigner for counsel he will most likely suggest to you that the Grand Duke of Hesse, with his Herr von Dalwigk, should be created King of Elsass. It is so, and we are surrounded by secret enemies. Even the unworthy attitude of England has a deeper root than her mere indolent love of peace—it springs from her unspoken mistrust of the incalculable power of New Germany. In company with the Great Powers, Switzerland and the Netherlands see our growing strength with suspicion. Watched as we are by angry neighbours, we must trust gallantly in our own Right and in our sword. If Germany is powerful enough to tear the border country away from

France she can venture, without troubling herself about the reluctance of foreign countries, to hand them over to the protectorate of Prussia.

But the solution of the question of the people of Elsass involves the nearest future of the German State. For Bavaria, strengthened by Elsass, and hemming in all her South German neighbours, would be the great power of the German South. No man who comprehends this great time, would dream of replacing the unlucky dualism of Austria and Prussia by a new dualism of Prussia and Bavaria, between which a powerless Baden and a weak Würtemberg would be kept feebly oscillating. The day for the secondary States of Germany to rise into fresh importance is past for ever. The first Napoleon created the kingdom of the South with the express intent that that seeming sovereignty might bar the way against a real and powerful German Kingdom, and that its apparent authority might undermine the real strength of Germany. By their German loyalty these Sovereigns have deserved the thanks of the whole nation to-day. They have obtained our forgiveness for the fault of their original existence. The blood which had to flow before North and South could be united, has flowed, thank God, in battle against the hereditary enemy and not in

civil war. Even we radical partisans of unity are delighted, and have no intention now of ever diminishing the authority of the Bavarian crown in opposition to the wishes of the Bavarian people themselves. Why should we be asked to increase the power of the secondary States, which is unquestionably too great at present for any permanent national existence? Why should we celebrate our victory over the third Napoleon by strengthening the creation of the first? We are determined to secure the Unity of Germany, and to leave no treacherous German Balance of Power.

Deep-thinking persons advise us to reflect whether the augmentation of its territory might not predispose Bavaria to enter the German Confederation. Those who talk so have little notion of the power of the national idea. The entry of Bavaria is merely a question of time, and it must come as surely as the blossom passes into fruit. If Elsass be first made Prussian and then admitted, along with Baden, into the German Confederation, we may rest secure against the blindness of the sovereigns of Munich, and wait in patience till the sense of what will be to her own advantage, constrains Bavaria to come in. If Elsass fell to Bavaria our European policy could not rise out of its everlasting uncertainty, or our German policy surmount the feeble

vacillation of its past. There is only one way in which the jealousy of foreign Powers can prevent a just peace for Germany—they may try to separate Bavaria from Prussia. If this be prevented, public opinion, North and South, will declare itself unanimously, "It is our will that Elsass and Lothringen should become Prussian, because it is only so that they will become German." The spirit of the nation has already acquired a wonderful force in these blessed weeks; and it is able, when it declares itself unanimously in favour of this clear and straightforward course, to cure the Court of Munich of sickly and ambitious dreams, which an intelligent Bavarian policy can never encourage.

The people of Elsass have learned to despise this Germany, broken into fragments. They will learn to love us when the strong hand of Prussia has educated them. We are no longer dreaming, as Arndt did many years ago, of a new German Order, whose task it was to be to guard the border-land. The sober and upright principles which we have applied in all newly-taken provinces are completely applicable here in the West. After a short period of transition, under a strict dictatorship, the new districts may enter, without danger, into the full enjoyment of the rights of the Prusso-German constitution. When the official world has once

been cleared by the moderate use of pensions, every attempt at treachery will be repressed with relentless severity; but native officials who know the country will be employed here, as they have been everywhere in the new provinces. Even the good old Prussian fashion, according to which the troops that garrisoned the fortresses usually came from the provinces in which they were situated, may be applied here cautiously after a time. We Germans despise the babyish war against stone and bronze, in which the French are adepts. We left the monuments of Hoche and Marceau standing, in honour, in the Department of the Lower Rhine, and we have no intention of transgressing against any of the glorious memories of the people of Elsass and Lothringen. Still less shall we meddle with their language. The German State must, of course, speak German only; but it will always practise the mild regulations it has adopted in the mixed districts of Posen and Schleswig Holstein. It would contradict all our Prussian ways of thinking, were we to assail with violence the customs of domestic life. All our hope rests on the re-awakening of the free German spirit. When once the mother tongue is taught, purely and honestly—when the Evangelical Church can again move about in undisturbed liberty — when an intel-

ligent German provincial Press brings back the country to the knowledge of German life—the cure of its sickness will have begun. Is it idle folly to give expression to the hope which rises unbidden in a scholar's mind? Why should the great University of Strassburg, restored again after its disgraceful mutilation, not bring as many blessings to the Upper Rhine provinces, as Bonn has done to the Lower. Another Rhenana in Upper Germany would certainly be a worthy issue of the German war, which has been a struggle between ideas and sensuous self-seeking.

The work of liberation will be hard and toilsome; and the first German teachers and officials in the estranged districts are not men to be envied. The monarchical feeling of the German people there has been thoroughly broken up by hateful party fights. The Ultramontanes on the right bank will soon conclude a close alliance with those on the left, and there will be found, even among the German Liberals, many good souls, ready trustfully to re-echo the cry of pain which the people of Elsass will raise against the fury of Borussic Officialism. But the province cannot, after all, long continue to be a German Venice. Single families of the upper classes may migrate indignantly into foreign countries, as the patricians of Danzig once fled

before the Prussian Eagle. The rest will soon adapt themselves to the German life, just as the Polonised German nobility of West Prussia have resumed their old German names since they became Prussian subjects. Even the material advantages which the Prussian State brings with it are considerable; lighter taxes better distributed, and finances better arranged; the opening of the natural channels of commerce for the country of the Saar and the Mosel; the rasing of those useless fortifications of Vauban, which, maintained in the interest of the traditional war policy of the French, have hitherto limited the progress of so many towns of Elsass. Even the manufacturing industry of the country will discover new and broad openings, naturally after a trying period of transition, in East Germany. But all this is of secondary importance as compared with the ideal advantages which they will derive from their German political life. And are these German lads to grumble because they are no longer compelled to learn Welsh? Will the citizens be angry with us for ever, when they find that they are permitted freely to elect their own burgomaster? when they have to deal with well-educated, honourable German-speaking officials? when we offer them in place of their worthless *Conseils Generaux*, a provincial diet, with an independent ac-

tivity; and in place of their *Corps Legislatif*, a powerful parliament? when their sons will all be entitled to pass a brief period of service in the neighbourhood of their own homes, instead of wasting long years as homeless soldiers of fortune in migratory regiments? when they mingle unmolested in the numerous unions and gatherings of our free and joyous social life? The deadly hatred which the Ultramontane clergy show towards the Prussian State is the happiest omen for the future. Such an enmity must draw all the Protestants, and all the Catholics who can think freely, in this province, to the side of Prussia.

Humbled, and torn by contending parties, France will find it very difficult to think of a war of vengeance for the next few years. Give us time, and it is to be hoped that Strassburg may then have risen out of her ruins, and that the people of Elsass may already have become reconciled to their fate. Their grand-children will look back one day as coldly and strangely on the two-century-long French episode in the history of their German district, as the Pomeranians now do on the century and a-half of Swedish government. No German soil anywhere has ever repented placing itself under the protection of Prussia when it passed out of

the subjection to the foreigner, which is, taken at the best of it, but a splendid misery.

Who knows not Uhland's Minstersage, the beautiful poem which expresses so finely and so truly the love which the Germans bear to the land of Goethe's youth. The old dome begins to shake as the young poet ascends the tower.

> "A movement through the mighty work,
> As though, in wondrous wise,
> Its body travailed to give birth
> To what unfinished lies."

O Ludwig Uhland, and all of you who dreamt of a great and free Germany, in the desolate days bye-gone, how far stronger than your dreams are the days in which we are living now! How much else that was unfinished then has yet to be born anew in the restored German land! It is all but three hundred years since a Hohenzollern, the Margrave Johann Georg, chosen as coadjutor of Strassburg, bore the title of Landgrave in Elsass; but his young State did not dare to defend the claim. The great stream of German popular power which burst forth and rolled its mighty waters over the Slave country of the north-east is flowing back westward to-day, to fertilise anew its former bed, now

choked up, the fair native lands of German civilisation. In the same Western Marches, where our ancient Empire endured its deepest disgrace, the new Empire is completed by German victories; and the Prussia which has so often, and so shamefully been evil-spoken of by German lips, is building up the State, which is destined to march on, proud, thoughtful, warlike, from century to century.

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